

21. (Amended) A device for securing passwords and personal identification numbers comprising:

a² a generator for creating a MasterCode having a subset of characters randomly drawn from a character set which includes numbers, symbols and alphabet characters;

means for embedding the MasterCode in a MasterGrid;

a translator for translating the MasterCode into a numeric sequence to form numeric representations of the characters; and

assigning the numeric representations to the character sequence of passwords which may be given to the user, generated by the process or chosen by him.

a³ 32. (Amended) The method of claim 31 wherein the relationship of the data to the other typographical symbols includes tracing out said graphical image as a pattern in sequence and placing typographical symbols from said data in cells of a grid corresponding to the graphical image.

Please add new claims as follows:

34. 43. (New) A method for accessing an apparatus using a password

comprising the steps of:

masking said password in a graphical image; and

re-constructing said password using said graphical image.

35. 44. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein said graphical image comprises a plurality of cells

and said masking step includes selecting a subset of said cells for masking said password.

36. 45. (New) The method of claim 44, wherein said selected subset forms a pattern.

37. 46. (New) The method of claim 44, wherein said re-constructing step includes re-selecting said subset in said graphical image.

³⁷
~~47.~~ (New) The method of claim ~~44~~³⁴, wherein said subset is selected in a predetermined sequence.

³⁸
~~48.~~ (New) The method of claim ~~47~~³⁷, wherein said re-constructing step includes re-selecting said subset in said predetermined sequence.

⁴⁹
~~49.~~ (New) A secure device for allowing access using a password, the apparatus comprising:

means for masking said password in a graphical image;

means for displaying said graphical image; and

means for accepting the re-construction of said password using the graphical image.

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~~50.~~ (New) The secure device of claim ~~49~~³⁹, wherein said graphical image comprises a plurality of cells and said masking means accepts a selection of a subset of said cells for masking said password.

⁴¹
~~51.~~ (New) The secure device of claim ~~50~~⁴⁰, wherein said selected subset forms a pattern.

⁴²
~~52.~~ (New) The secure device of claim ~~50~~⁴⁰, wherein said re-construction includes re-selecting said subset in said graphical image.

⁴³
~~53.~~ (New) The secure device of claim ~~50~~⁴⁰, wherein said subset is selected in a predetermined sequence.

⁴⁴
~~54.~~ (New) The secure device of claim ~~53~~⁴³, wherein said re-construction includes re-selecting said subset in said predetermined sequence.

⁴⁵
~~55.~~ (New) The secure device of claim ~~54~~⁴⁴, wherein said accepting means rejects said re-construction if said re-construction does not trace said predetermined sequence.